

For Immediate Release

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County Officials Urge Residents to Support Extension of County Bridge Match Program

Pawnee County, NE -- Since 2016, the Nebraska Department of Transportation County Bridge Match Program (CBMP) has played a critical role in improving local infrastructure through a cost-sharing partnership between counties and the state.

Under the program, counties receive 55% of the construction cost – up to \$500,000 per project --- for approved bridge projects. Approval is determined by a working group consisting of two county officials (highway superintendents, surveyors, or engineers) and three NDOT representatives.

This collaborative, jointly funded initiative helps our communities, especially in rural Nebraska, replace and repair deficient bridges – improving public safety and ensuring reliable transportation for goods and services. In Pawnee County, 8 bridges have been repaired or replaced through funding provided by this program.

Unfortunately, unless lawmakers appropriate additional state funds in 2026, this critical infrastructure program will not be able to continue through its scheduled expiration in 2029. The lack of funding for the CBMP is a serious concern for Pawnee County. While the program has made meaningful progress, the need goes beyond what can be accomplished in just a few years. In the most recent – and potentially final -- CBMP application period, Pawnee County has applied for an estimated \$505,500.00 for a bridge replacement project. CBMP funds help ensure that approved projects are not deferred and help limit the burden on property taxpayers.

When funding for programs like the CBMP goes away, the financial burden for critical infrastructure needs falls on taxpayers – often in the form of increased property taxes. It's important to keep in mind that safe, open bridges mean farmers can transport goods to market, emergency responders always have the most efficient route to emergencies, and kids can get to school safely. Programs like the CBMP impact the daily lives of Nebraskans and the economic well-being of the communities they reside in.

The CBMP has proven itself to be an effective and efficient collaborative solution between the state and counties. County officials encourage residents to contact their state senators today to ask them to support continued funding of the program.